

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 2971

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJECT: PLANS FOR INTERIM NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

REF: ISLAMABAD 2744

1. EFFORTS BY THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION (MLA) TO

BUILD SUPPORT AMONG THE POLITICAL PARTIES FOR THE FORMATION OF
AN INTERIM NATIONAL GOVERNMENT CONTINUE. TALKING WITH
NEWSMEN IN PESHAWAR 24 MARCH, CHIEF MARTIAL LAW
ADMINISTRATOR (CMLA) GEN. ZIA STATED THAT THE RESPONSE
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FROM THE POLITICAL PARTIES HAD BEEN "ENCOURAGING" THUS
FAR (PAK TIMES, 25 MARCH), BUT THAT ALL PARTIES WOULD
HAVE TO PARTICIPATE IF THE IDEA WERE TO BE USEFUL.
ZIA IS PRESUMABLY REFERRING TO MEETING ON 22 MARCH OF
MAULANA MUFTI MAHMOOD AND PROF. GHAFOR AHMED OF THE
PAKISTAN NATIONAL ALLIANCE (PNA) WITH LGEN CHISTI OF
THE ELECTION CELL. (CF. REFTTEL). PAK TIMES (MARCH 26),

QUTOING INFORMED SOURCES, REPORTS THAT THE PNA, WHICH HAD DIRECTED ITS MEMBERS LAST YEAR NOT TO ACCEPT ADVISERSHIPS TO THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION, MIGHT CHANGE ITS POSITION.

2. URDU DAILIES JANG AND NAWA-I-WAQT REPORT 26 MARCH THAT WALI KHAN MET WITH ZIA EVENING OF 22 MARCH, ALLEGEDLY TO DISCUSS A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT. NAWA-I-WAQT, IN A SPECULATIVE REPORT, WENT ON TO STATE THAT WALI AGREED TO JOIN THE PROPOSED NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, THAT PAKISTAN PEOPLES PARTY (PPP) LEADERS HAVE STATED THAT THEY COULD MAKE NO DECISION UNTIL AFTER BHUTTO FILED HIS APPEAL, AND THAT TEHRIQ-I-ISTAQLAL HAS NOT YET MADE A COMMITMENT. DAWN REPORTS 26 MARCH THAT ZIA WILL MEET WITH OTHER POLITICAL LEADERS "IN THE NEAR FUTURE" FOR ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSAL.

3. THE SAUDI AMBASSADOR TOLD AMB TODAY THAT WALI KHAN AND ASGHAR KHAN HAD REFUSED TO JOIN IN OR SUPPORT SUCH A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, AND THAT THE PNA HAD GIVEN THE MLA A LIST OF (UNSPECIFIED) CONDITIONS ITS LEADERS WILL INSIST UPON BEFORE SUPPORTING THE MOVE.

4. THE MLA MUST DECIDE BY APRIL WHETHER TO CONTINUE THE CURRENT MONTH-LONG BAN ON ALL POLITICAL ACTIVITIES. ZIA MAY WISH TO COUPLE AN EXTENSIO OF THE BAN, FOR
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INSTANCE, WITH THE NEWS ABOUT PLANS FOR A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AS THE FIRST STEP TOWARD THE PROMISED ELECTIONS. THIS COULD HELP TO DEFUSE ADVERSE REACTIONS TO A CONTINUED BAN AND COULD ALSO ASSURE THE MLA OF THE SUPPORT OF THE PNA, AND POSSIBLY OTHERS, DURING THE DIFFICULT DAYS AHEAD AS THE SUPREME COURT WEIGHS THE BHUTTO APPEAL. HUMMEL

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